

## **NFL Athletes Conduct Clinic For Russian Youth**

Bryce Fisher, Patrick Kerney, and Max Starks IV, members of the Seattle Seahawks, Atlanta Falcons, and Pittsburgh Steelers, respectively, transited in Moscow during their recent USO tour in the region. The State Department and our U.S. Embassy in Moscow arranged a meeting with approximately 60 Russian youth and their coaches from two Moscow-based American football youth teams at the Novogorsk Sports Training Facility in Moscow.

The athletes spoke about football in America, American culture and values, and engaged in a lively exchange with the youth. After the discussion, the athletes conducted two mini-clinics (one for offense, one for defense), showing proper technique for warming up, tackles, diet and training tips, defensive tactics, and demonstrated positions and tricks with several of the youth, as well as members of the MSG Detachment, who were also in attendance. After the event the athletes spent an hour autographing everything in sight and talking with the Russian youth.

The event met with overwhelmingly positive feedback and enthusiasm, and the President of the American Football Federation in Russia encouraged further cooperation based on the meeting. The event was covered by five television channels, including RTR, NTV, Sport TV (the main Russian nationwide sports channel, with a viewership of approx. 55 million), and others. During athletes' media interviews, they stressed to the journalists the value of sports in building mutual understanding, teamwork, and cross-cultural understanding. They expressed their surprise and encouragement that a uniquely American sport was so well-received in Russia.